



# THE NORTHLAND SKY WATCHER

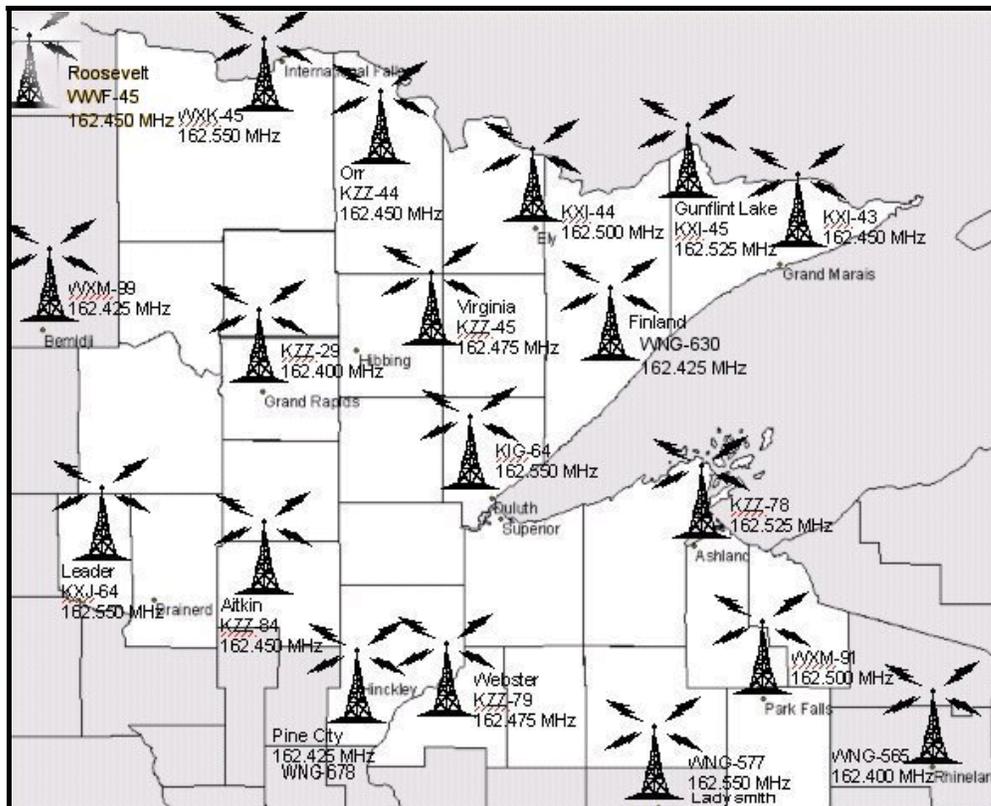
*For National Weather Service weather watchers of northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin*

## We've Got the Northland Covered - With NOAA Weather Radio

With the installation of the Finland, MN transmitter, we can now say that most people in the northland have access to a NOAA weather radio signal that provides constant weather information. With the purchase of a simple weather radio receiver that costs as little as \$10, people can be alerted to dangerous weather and other life-threatening dangers such as terrorist attacks or hazardous spills.

Since 2000, 14 weather radio stations have been installed either by the National

Weather Service or at the state or local level. Many stations installed in northern Minnesota were funded, in part, by grants obtained through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after the areas received presidential disaster declarations. Many areas of northeastern Minnesota received presidential declarations from a series of windstorms that hit three July mornings in a row in 1995, while the far Arrowhead received a declaration after the big 1999 Blowdown. Other areas received their weather transmitters via a Congressional earmark (Ladysmith, WI) or through state funding (Webster, Ashland, and Rhinelander).



*NWR transmitter in northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin.*

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# Weather Service News

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## Intern Receives National Award

Cammye Sims, meteorologist intern at WFO Duluth, received the quarterly aviation award from the national Weather Service Headquarters (NWSH) in Silver Spring, MD. Cammye helped troubleshoot software and write the user manual for Aviation Forecast Preparation System (AVNFPS), the NWS's software for composing and monitoring of Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts (TAF) and Transcribed Weather Broadcasts (TWEB). All NWS Forecasters will benefit from Cammye's hard work. See more news about Cammye below.



## We Lost a Great Guy



We were saddened to learn about the untimely death of someone many of us considered a friend- Skywarn spotter Thomas Currier AB0TC. Tom was an avid amateur radio operator and was a frequent volunteer at the office. He was here whenever we needed help,

either to install ham equipment, work the Skywarn Recognition Day, or most importantly, during severe weather to man the Skywarn Ham Network. We always enjoyed Tom's time with us and his sense of humor.

I never thanked Tom for pushing me to get my ham license. The hams I work with had been suggesting for quite some time that I get my license, but I didn't seem to get around to it. However, it was Tom's gentle persuasion that finally got me going and in no time I passed the exam. Thanks, Tom, we'll miss you.

*-Carol Christenson, KCOMAK*

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## More Good-byes and Hellos on the Way

Our office will be going through some personnel changes during the next few months.

Cammye Sims, meteorologist intern, will be heading west to Sacramento, CA where she will be a forecaster. This is a promotion for the 2002 Oklahoma University at Norman graduate. Cammye came here in the summer of 2002 and became our snow spotter program manager. When asked what she'll remember most about her stay in Duluth, the native Texan replied, "Winters here sure are a lot of work, but I will miss Lake Superior."

David Tomalak, our information technology officer (ITO), will also be heading west- to Boulder, CO, where he will be an ITO. This will put him closer to the mountains that he loves and closer to his new nephew. However, being a Wisconsin native, he will always be a cheese head at heart and will continue to root for the Packers and Badgers. Dave's generosity with his time and expertise at programming and troubleshooting computer systems will be sorely missed.

We wish Cammye and Dave best wishes on their career journeys.

In May we will welcome a new intern, Amanda Brandt. Amanda is finishing her final year at St. Cloud State University where she will graduate with a degree in meteorology in May. For the past three years Amanda has been balancing school and work at the Chanhassen National Weather Service Office as a student intern, but it has been work with rewards. As soon as she receives her degree, she'll head north and take Cammye's place on our roster.



## COME ONE, COME ALL!

Skywarn training season is upon us and here we got a full schedule this year. Check out the schedule below and mark your calendars for a fun and educational two hours. We require Skywarn spotters to be retrained at least every four years. Check our Skywarn page at [www.crb.noaa.gov/dlb/skysched.htm](http://www.crb.noaa.gov/dlb/skysched.htm) for later additions to this schedule.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
March 10	6:00 pm	Spooer Fire Hall
March 15	6:30 pm	St. Croix Tribal Clinic, Hertel, WI (on Highway 70)
March 16	6:30 pm	Siren, WI Government Center
March 18	6:00 pm	Grand Rapids, MN Courthouse
March 22	6:00 pm	International Falls, MN Rainy River Community College Science Bldg, Rm 108
March 24	7:00 pm	Floodwood, MN School
March 25	1:00 pm	Shell Lake, WI Law Enforcement Center
April 5	6:30 pm	Superior, WI, Douglas County Gov't Center (use the north entrance)
April 6	2:30 pm	Phillips, WI Check local paper for location
April 6	6:30 pm	Park Falls, WI Municipal Building
April 8	6:30 pm	Brainerd, MN Social Services Bldg
April 12	7:00 pm	Hinckley, MN
April 13	6:30 pm	Superior, WI WITC
April 14	6:30 pm	Virginia, MN Nichols Town Hall
April 20	1:00 pm	Marcell, MN Family Center, 49103 State Hwy 38
April 21	1:00 pm	Hayward, WI Ambulance Garage
April 21	5:00 pm	Winter, WI Fire Hall
April 23	7:00 pm	Grand Marais, MN Community Center
April 28	6:30 pm	Palisade, MN Community Center
May 10	7:00 pm	Hermantown, MN Public Safety Building



**BE A SKYWARN SPOTTER  
AND HELP YOUR COMMUNITY!**

## Winter Season Review

### Snow Returns to the Northland a More Normal Winter- Finally

It's been cold and snowy over the Northland this winter, in contrast to the balmy and dry winters we've had in the past few years.

This winter season, which is defined as the months of December through February, was the fifth snowiest winter in Duluth with 74.1" of snow. The snowiest winter season was 1968-69 with 87.5" of snow.

The winter season of 2003-2004 started out like the last several winters with warmer than normal temperatures and below normal snowfall into December. Arctic air made its first appearance across the Northland during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of January as temperatures dropped into the teens and 20s below zero. The storm track started to bring a series of snow storms across the region, with a major snow storm on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of January. Duluth wound up with 27.2 inches for the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest snow storm ever recorded. An Arctic blast followed the storm with temperatures plummeting to the lowest readings since January of 1996. The coldest temperatures were on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January with lows of -47 at Cook, -43 at Embarrass, and -40 at Tower. Many stations saw lows in the 30s below zero.



*Abundant snow this winter has made many northland kids happy.*

The month of January ended with average temperatures from 4 to 8 degrees below normal and snowfall totals from 10 to 20 inches above normal.

Temperatures moderated through February with our first winter thaw on the 18<sup>th</sup> when temperatures reached the upper 30s and the mid 40s across most of the Northland.

Late February snowfall totals for the season continue above normal, ranging from 61 inches at International Falls to 98 inches at Duluth. Last year at this time Duluth had received only 26 inches of snow and International Falls only 36 inches.

There is no indication of above or below normal temperatures or precipitation for the spring season of March through May for northeastern Minnesota or northwestern Wisconsin. However, colder than normal temperatures are expected to move into western Minnesota early in the period, which are forecast to be over the region by late spring into early summer.

*-Sam Standfield, Duluth Climate Specialist*



# The Spotter's Page

## Spotter Reporting

When severe weather strikes, we depend on you, our spotters, to watch the skies and call us with severe weather information..

Here are some reminders on how and what to report.

Use the NWS Duluth Spotter hotline to call in your reports.

### How to Report:

Tell us:

- ☛ **Who** you are
- ☛ **What** you observed
- ☛ **Where** the event occurred:  
Exact location and county
- ☛ **When** the event occurred
- ☛ **Damage** that you witnessed

### What to Report:

- ☛ Tornadoes
- ☛ Funnel clouds
- ☛ Rotating wall clouds
- ☛ Hail (any size)
- ☛ Damaging winds
- ☛ Flooding
- ☛ Any weather phenomena causing death or serious injury

## Last Summer:

- ❖ We had over 60 reports of severe hail (3/4" or larger).
- ❖ The largest hail reported in the northland was 2.75 inches in diameter. It fell in Indus, MN on the far northern border of the state on July 14<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ There was 1 tornado (a waterspout) in the northland- on Roosevelt Lake, one mile south of Outing, MN.
- ❖ We had over 30 incidences of severe thunderstorm winds over 58 mph.

## Spotter Safety

Skywarn spotters provide critical information for all hazards. Spotting for severe storms can be dangerous and requires considerable knowledge. If you are not comfortable in any weather situation, immediately seek shelter.

- The best view angle and safest spot to observe a tornadic storm is south of the storm.
- During a thunderstorm, remain in your vehicle with the windows rolled up. Stay indoors away from windows.
- Never stand under trees or other tall objects during a thunderstorm.
- Never drive over water-covered roads.

## How to Receive Weather Information

It is important for you to stay abreast of the latest weather developments. NOAA Weather Radio is the best way to receive forecasts and warnings from the National Weather Service. Listen for the *Hazardous Weather Outlook* on your location NOAA Weather Radio station (see page 1) for the *Hazardous Weather Outlook*. You'll hear it every morning from around 7:30 am until 9:30 am. The Hazardous Weather Outlook will contain information about any type of hazardous weather expected, including thunderstorms, within the next week. We keep this updated throughout the day, so be sure to check in once in awhile, especially during rapidly-changing weather conditions.

The NWS Duluth web site has many links to forecasts and severe weather watches and warnings:

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/dlh>



The Northland Sky Watcher is a newsletter published by the National Weather Service Office in Duluth, MN for our weather spotters and observers. We welcome your questions and comments. We can be reached by:

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